



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/815,606	03/23/2001	George Harry Hoffman	41556/04802 (RSI1P095)	7209
22428	7590	02/18/2004	EXAMINER	
FOLEY AND LARDNER SUITE 500 3000 K STREET NW WASHINGTON, DC 20007			ZEENDER, FLORIAN M	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		3627		

DATE MAILED: 02/18/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.	HOFFMAN ET AL.
Examiner F. Ryan Zeender	Art Unit 3627

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 December 2003.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-15 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 13.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claims 1-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over chapters 13-15 of the cited "Production and Operations Management" manual, in view of the PR Newswire article, "AGILE, ANDERSEN CONSULTING ANNOUNCE STRATEGIC ALLIANCE".

The manual discloses an appointed manager's responsibilities in managing a supply chain for generating revenue for a firm.

The manual lacks the specific teaching of the supply chain having multiple participants; an independent appointed manager; the invoice price of a contract being different than a contract price; the independent manager establishing the invoice price at various times during the term of the supply agreement; and wherein an overpayment or underpayment is reconciled.

The PR Newswire article teaches that it is well known in business to encompass all members of a supply chain into a single Internet-based environment; to appoint an independent manager (i.e., Andersen Consulting) for supply chain management including buying decision support, purchase orders, commodity and contract management, and supplier performance management (See, for example, Page 3, paragraph 3).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify chapters 13-15 of the manual to include the specific teaching of a supply chain having multiple participants and an independent appointed manager, in

view of the PR Newswire article, in order to provide a “global presence, proven methodology, and experience in business transformation” with “collaborative manufacturing commerce solutions” (See Page 3, paragraph 4 of the article) in order to “squeeze every possible penny” out of manufacturing operations.

It would have been an obvious design choice to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of the manual in view of the article to have the invoice price of a contract be different than a contract price, as is well known in business, for example when a selling company honors a discount coupon presented by a buyer.

It would have been an obvious design choice to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of the manual in view of the article to have the independent manager establish the invoice price at various times during the term of the supply agreement; as is known in business, for example to account for discount coupons/rebates presented by the buyer during the term of the agreement.

It would have been a further obvious design choice to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of the manual in view of the article to have an overpayment or underpayment reconciled; as is known in business, in order for both the seller and the buyer (or buyer’s agent/manager) to receive/pay the required amount.

Response to Arguments

Applicant’s arguments with respect to claims 1-15 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to F. Ryan Zeender whose telephone number is (703) 308-8351. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Bob Olszewski can be reached on (703) 308-5183. The receptionist's phone number for the Technology center is (703) 308-1113.

Application/Control Number: 09/815,606
Art Unit: 3627

Page 5

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9327 for after-final communications.

F. Zeender  2/12/04
Primary Examiner, A.U. 3627
February 13, 2004